

Grace Tidings

A Newsletter of Avalon Grace Church

September - October 2026

RELATIONSHIPS MATTER TO GOD

We read in Genesis 1:26: "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness . . .'" The creation account in Genesis gives us a beautiful truth about God, who He is, what He has done, and what He continues to do with His creation of mankind. Here in this verse we learn of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – the Triune God created humanity, in His own image and likeness of God – body, soul and spirit.

Just think: You. Me. Every single person we meet—from the smiling, courteous cashier at Home Depot to the unwelcomed 'Solicitor' who ignores the community's "No Soliciting" sign or the shopper who cuts in front of you at the "Express" check out at Publix – we are all made in the image of God.

Why should this matter? Because the more we understand God's image—His nature—the more we can understand how and why God may open doors throughout your life to new relationships and that at other times He closes doors to relationships. For example, relationships that disturb your peace and compromise your relationship with Jesus; influence you in ways that are contrary to God's Word and His purpose for your life, or simply relationships that are not good for you and stunt your growth in Christ Jesus.

Have you ever sensed that God is leading you away from certain relationships – a neighbor, friend, colleague, or family member? Have you ever thought that the unhealthy relationship you've been trying to hold on to, cared for and prayed about – could actually be the Lord telling you to let go – that your peace, growth, and relationship with Him is more important? Whether we realize it or not, we are all affected by the people with whom we spend time and listen to. Their attitudes, philosophies, language, and spirituality (good or bad) have a tendency to rub off on us, even if we don't realize it.

(continued on Page 2)



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Pastor Phillip McClellan, Jr.

Pastor Emeritus Arthur Sims

Kathleen Smith, Editor

All Are Welcome!

Sunday Worship 10:30 AM

(Sunday Messages available on website:
www.avalongracechurch.com) and YouTube

Children's Sunday School 10:45 AM

**"And to make all men see
what is the fellowship of the mystery,
which from the beginning of the world
hath been hid in God, who created
all things by Jesus Christ: . . ."**

- Ephesians 3:9



The Lord warns us about this in I Corinthians 15:33: "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." This warning isn't only true for young people. It is true for believers of all ages. We might not want to think this could happen to us, but the Lord encourages us not to be deceived about this important principle.

The fall of man corrupted mankind but faith in Christ creates a new nature in us. This new nature must be fed from God's word to gain strength and grow so that the old flesh nature can be resisted. Here are a few verses out of many that caution believers to take care and be aware of the pitfalls of the world system and the devil's desire to defeat Christians in their lives:

II Timothy 2:4 "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."

I Peter 5:8 "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:"

Ephesians 6:11 "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

David realized how vital it was to surround himself with the right kind of spiritually minded people. His testimony was, "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts" (Psalm 119:63). He intentionally chose to minimize the time he spent around the ungodly, or the somewhat spiritually minded, and to maximize his time around truly dedicated believers. Doing so gave him continual encouragement to walk after the Lord with a pure heart and not after the ways of the world.

The Apostle Paul embraced this principle for living too. As we look through his letters, it is easy to see the close relationship he maintained with many saints who were truly living for the Lord. Luke, Aquilla and Priscilla, Philemon, Titus, and Timothy are only a few he mentions with whom he had consistent fellowship. In contrast, neither Paul nor David spent a great deal of time with the lost, or ungodly, unless it was in ministering to them.

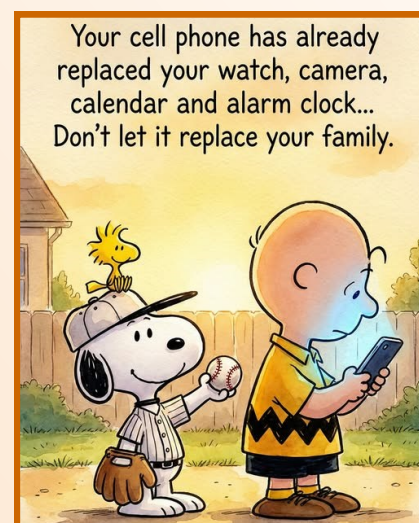
Certainly believers should never cut themselves off

from the unsaved or become hermits waiting for the rapture. We have instruction and examples to the contrary. We learn from II Corinthians 5:20 that "we are ambassadors for Christ" with the ministry of reconciliation or, in other words, the mission of sharing a clear gospel of grace with all that we can. Similarly, Ephesians 3:9 tells us Paul's mission was also to "make (or help) all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery." We too should share this goal of seeking to share with everyone the gospel of grace and the joyous news of God's secret program of grace that is distinct from Israel and the Mosaic Law. So, we should have a ministry-minded outreach to others.

However, the proper balance to find should be in still maintaining an outward ministry by sharing Christ with others as God leads; yet limiting our time with the lost and discerning the Lord's direction when certain relationships are best left behind us. It is important for us to "be not deceived" about how others influence us and therefore to choose, like David and Paul before us, to make friends and companions of those who are so spiritually minded that we will be continually encouraged in the Lord. Is it important who we spend time with and how relationships matter this side of eternity? It certainly is!

As we celebrate Labor Day this year, let's thank God for the many relationships we have and the useful work He has given us to do knowing that we are eternally secure because of the glorious grace of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Have a blessed Labor Day holiday!

Pastor Phil





“Perseverance is the hard work you do after you get tired of doing the hard work you already did.”
- Newt Gingrich

“Don’t worry when you are not recognized, but strive to be worthy of recognition.” - Abraham Lincoln

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made. - Genesis 2:1-3

“And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.”
- 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

“Never put off till tomorrow what you can do the day after tomorrow.” - Mark Twain

“Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.”
- Exodus 20: 9-10

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” - 1 Corinthians 15:33

A quarter century after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, millions of Americans are too young to remember the day that changed our nation and families forever. It is our shared promise — made 25 years ago — to never forget so those born after 9/11 learn its significance and enduring legacy. For those who experienced the horror, it is with great reverence that we remember and commemorate this 25th anniversary. A new generation will learn about the unimaginable loss experienced and the inspiring stories of bravery, faith, compassion, unity, and service that we witnessed, and have rippled through the years.

May we remember all the people who lost their lives that awful Tuesday morning and those who've had to live with the loss of loved ones, the fathers and mothers little ones never knew and the lingering effects. May we also remember how we came together as a country to support one another. We thank God for all the brave men and women who were first responders that day and the military personnel who fought to keep us safe. We will not forget!

I Remember September 11th

I remember 9/11
Planes flying low, smoke from the towers
Cries from the injured, calls for help
People running
Sobs from witnesses
Heroes running in the towers
Faces we will never see again
I remember
The towers falling
Smoke filling the air
People running for safety
Screams of terror
I remember
The quiet
People in the streets
Heroes walking around the rubble
Whispers in the streets
I remember
Victims not forgotten
Heroes not forgotten
Sacrifices not forgotten
Memories not forgotten

By Kevin Sadler, The Berean Searchlight, February 2021

A photograph of a wooden door with a vertical grain. The door has a central handle and two small rectangular panels on either side. The wood is light-colored with some darker spots and grain patterns. The door is set within a frame, and there are dark horizontal lines on the left and right sides, possibly indicating the frame or hinges.

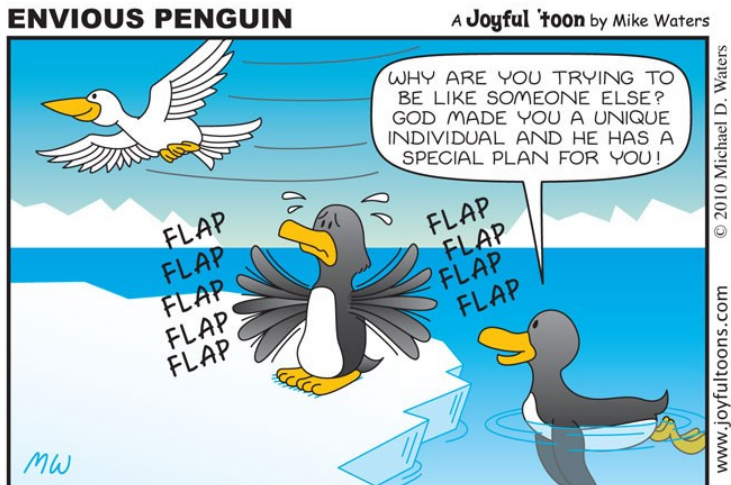


The door of the ark is a type of Christ as well. He is the door by Whom we enter into salvation. As the Lord taught Israel in His earthly ministry, and is a truth for us in the Body of Christ too, "I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved ..." (John 10:9).



ark with its single door, and the way of eternal salvation today is by the wooden cross upon which Christ died. And as the ark had only a single door, so it is that Christ is the one way, the only way to eternal safety.

A penguin would be quite sad and frustrated if he tried to use his wings to fly like other birds. But a penguin in the water is quite content because there he can use his wings to swim gracefully, as God created the penguin to be! Likewise, we will not find contentment and joy until we stop comparing ourselves to others, and instead, inquire of the Lord as to the place he has for us in his plan.



A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones.

COLUMBUS DAY, OCTOBER 12TH



**“... Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”
- 2 Corinthians 3:17**

In their book, “One Nation Under God,” authors Dr. David C. Gibbs (President of Christian Law Association) and Jerry Newcombe write about ten historical facts every Christian should know about the Founding of America. From Christopher Columbus (Christopher meaning God-bearing) to the Pilgrims and the Puritans; to the Great Awakening; to Christianity and the Constitution, the book shows historical evidence and personal writings that America was founded as a sanctuary for religious dissidents as well as the settlers being motivated by their Christian faith and the Word of God. For example, the Puritans created Bible-based commonwealths modeled after their church covenants, understanding the sinfulness of man and freedom were both guiding principles to give their citizens a representative government.

Today, there is a growing hostility against Christianity and religious liberty. There are powerful and wealthy secular groups doing everything possible to remove any vestige of Christianity from our nation’s infancy beginnings and culture. They are dedicated to rewriting America’s founding by removing all reference to God, the Bible, and Jesus Christ from our history. In 1492 Christopher Columbus (1451-1506) set sail from Spain to the New World; a voyage on the Santa Maria (named after the Lord’s mother) that would forever change the world and in Columbus’s mind, were the signs of the end of the age.

“... And I say that the sign which convinces me that our Lord is hastening the end of the world is the preaching of the gospel recently in so many lands.”

Columbus himself tells of the Christian motivation for his voyage in his “Book of Prophecies”:

“It was the Lord who put into my mind (I could feel His hand upon me) to sail to the Indies. All who heard of my project rejected it with laughter, ridiculing me. There is no question that the inspiration was from the Holy Spirit, because He comforted me with rays of marvelous illumination from the Holy Scriptures.”

Columbus was not a perfect saint; he was a man of flesh and blood. When Columbus finally arrived in the New World he ran off the deck of his ship weeping for joy. Then he proclaimed the words of the morning prayer that he and his crew had been praying every day on their long voyage:

**“Blessed be the light of day and the Holy Cross, we say:
And the Lord of Verity and the Holy Trinity
Blessed be the immortal soul and the Lord who keeps it whole.
Blessed be the light of day and he who sends the night away.”**

Removing Christianity and its history on Columbus, history must then remove the man entirely, because without his faith and his belief in God’s call upon his life, it is unlikely he would ever have attempted to sail to the West and discover the New World.



Despite the secular, false and godless attacks on Christopher Columbus, we must continue to remember his great contributions to Western civilization and the course of world history. Sadly, today Christopher Columbus is a man who is both praised and vilified; honored and ridiculed for evil simply for political and social purposes.

But the first thing every Christian should know about the founding of America is that Christopher Columbus was motivated by his Christian faith. He loved the Scriptures, was guided by them and hoped that discovering this New World would help bring about the return of Christ. When landing in the West Indies it was Christopher Columbus who named the people who occupied the new land “Indians.” It was his belief that the gospel of salvation would soon convert the people—the Indians to Christianity.

In his “Book of Prophecies” he wrote, **“My hope in the One who created us all sustains me. He is an ever present help in trouble.”** Like many Christians throughout the ages, Columbus believed he was living in the last days. He wrote in his “Book of Prophecies”:

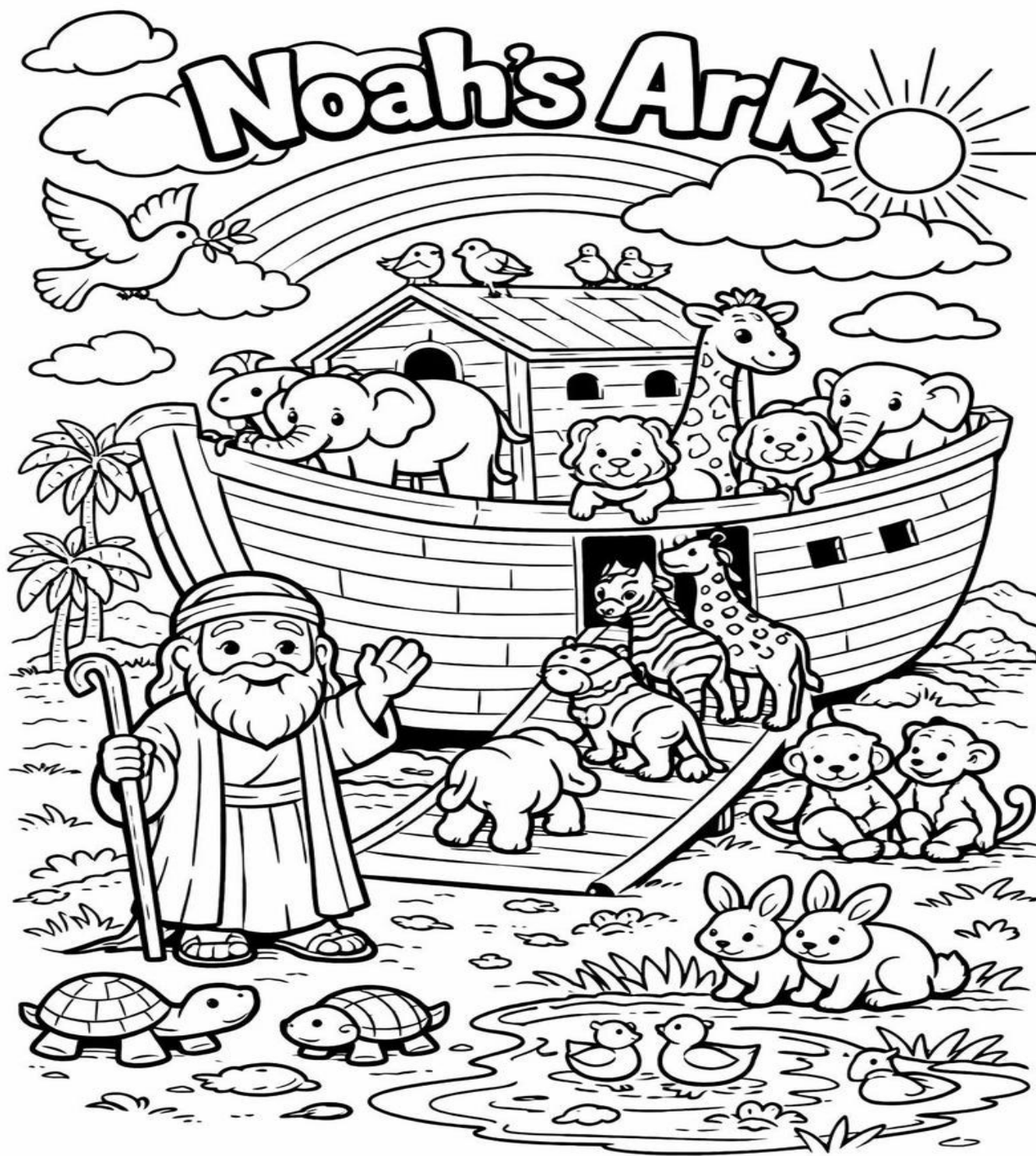
“The Holy Scriptures testify in the Old Testament, by the mouth of the prophets and in the New Testament, by our Savior Jesus Christ, that this world will come to an end: Matthew, Mark, and Luke have recorded the signs of the end of the age . . . And I say that the sign which convinces me that our Lord is hastening the end of the world is the preaching of the gospel recently in so many lands.”

Each Columbus Day we must celebrate the salvation of countless souls through the centuries’ in America made possible by the Word of God and that Christopher Columbus and his voyage on the Santa Maria was bringing the gospel to a New World. We must never forget America’s dependence on God . We are One Nation under God first being discovered in 1492 and remembered in our country annually on October 14th.

In the words of President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1955:

“Without God, there could be no American form of Government, nor an American way of life. Recognition of the Supreme Being is the first—the most basic—expression of Americanism. The Founding Fathers saw it, and thus, with God’s help, it will continue to be.” That is our prayer on this October 12th Columbus Day! That is the prayer of every Christian today.

Happy Columbus Day!



And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the LORD shut him in. - Genesis 7: 1, 16 KJV



**Avalon Grace
Church
of Naples, Florida**

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY
TO YOU!**



SEPTEMBER

8th Patty Hisler

15th John Lombard

23rd Joshua McClellan

27th Julie Carter

27th Victor Ramirez

COMING IN OCTOBER

4th 9:45 AM Sunday
Breakfast



OCTOBER

5th Sharon Riedel

18th Linda Bean

19th Marcine Cooney

COMING IN NOVEMBER

1st 9:45 AM Sunday
Breakfast
3rd Election Day
26th Thanksgiving Day

September 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6 9:45 Breakfast 10:30 Worship 10:45 Child. SS	7 LABOR DAY	8	9	10	11 <i>Patriot Day</i>	12 <i>Rosh Hashanah</i>
13 10:30 Worship 10:45 Child. SS <i>Grandparents Day</i>	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 10:30 Worship & the LORD'S SUPPER 10:45 Child. SS	21 <i>Yom Kippur</i>	22 <i>Autumn Begins</i>	23	24	25	26
27 10:30 Worship 10:45 Child. SS	28	29	30			

October 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 9:45 Breakfast 10:30 Worship 10:45 Child. SS	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 10:30 Worship 10:45 Child. SS	12 <i>Columbus Day</i>	13	14	15	16	17
18 10:30 Worship & the LORD's SUPPER 10:45 Child. SS	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 10:30 Worship 10:45 Child. SS	26	27	28	29	30	31 <i>Halloween</i>